

to return the bill to Select File for a specific amendment, that being to strike the enacting clause.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Kristensen.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the Legislature. I want to take this opportunity as we begin on the property tax package to rise to express my appreciation and I think that of the Revenue Committee, if I can take the liberty of speaking for them. And I want to thank the Legislature for your attention and your patience in dealing with this entire matter and hopefully for your acceptance of the property tax package. The last few days of the Legislature, as we've already seen this morning, as we'll see yet this afternoon I suppose, it's a time for a lot of major decisions, and we've had those today and we'll have them again, and this is no different than any other. But I think that it would be remiss to miss the opportunity to visit briefly about where we're at in this debate, what this is and what this isn't. And the property tax debate is not new to this state, that goes without saying. It's been the subject of debate since this state was born. It's as old as the state. And the passage of this package of bills won't end that debate. It will help shape it but it won't end it. And it's been a very long year. If you'll remember a year ago, Senator Warner asked permission from this Legislature to introduce a constitutional amendment late in the session, almost unprecedented to introduce legislation late in the session that was a constitutional amendment, that began the process that's hopefully be ending today. And for the first time in a long time we saw committee members going to committee hearings that were not their own committees. They were coming to Revenue Committee hearings. They were coming in, in the summer for informational meetings. I see so many of those faces today that were there, and that they began that narrowing. And the reason that it's so hard is that any time you get a group of people together to talk about property tax you have more options and more plans and more views than you have people, because it's really hard to do. There's so many things to do. And the same is true of the 49 of us. But what's important is this has been a process of narrowing. It's not a plan that started a year ago with...and sought to be legitimized or a plan that sought approval. It was a narrowing process and that process is not one bill. It does not have the magic answer that is going to solve Nebraska's property tax problems. That's not what this is